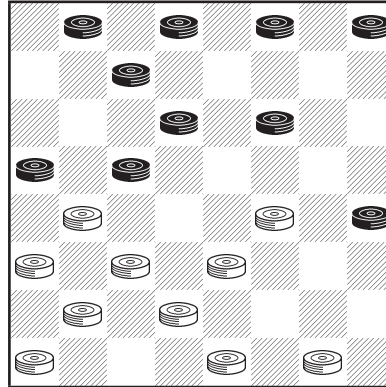


*The Old Checkerist*

BLACK



WHITE

*White to Play and Win*

Ned kept trying to breathe regularly and block out the pain. His chest was starting to feel tight, but he focused now on the board and on finding the right move. He knew that one slip and it would all be over.

Suddenly he saw through it. There were two moves that Ned could make. The one that looked most likely wouldn't work. But the other move, that was the one.

Ned was pulled out of his thoughts by the sound of the referee calling "Time!" This meant that Ned had just one more minute to make his move, or he would forfeit the game. He reached out his right hand hesitantly. It shook as he extended it over the board. Surely Ryman would notice; he knew how to play the opponent as well as the board.

Ned took another breath and made the move, then dropped his clammy right hand to his lap and sat back, waiting.